

# HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY CIVILIAN PERSONNEL BULLETIN

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**Number 06-15**

**December 2006**

Civilian Soldiers Supporting Soldiers

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## COMPETITIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The FY 07 Army Civilian Training, Education and Development System Training Catalog has been published. We have changed the way we manage the Career Program 10 Competitive Professional Development University training application process by eliminating the once-a-year application deadline in favor of quarterly application cut-off dates. We believe this new process will provide our CP-10 community seeking to improve their professional competencies with greater access to financial support.

Submission of nominations for the FY 07 academic year funding support must be received prior to the quarterly cut off dates of Nov. 17, 2006, Feb. 16, 2007, May 18, 2007, or Aug. 17, 2007. Application and selection procedures are outlined in the ACTEDS catalog at <http://cpol.army.mil/library/train/catalog/ch03cp10.html>.

Submit application packages through your chain of command and Army command to:

US Army Civilian Human Resources Agency  
ATTN: DAPE-CP-MAT (Antoinette Lewis)  
5445 Student Drive  
Building 5445, Room 201  
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21005-5200

## OPEN SEASON REMINDERS

The Open Season runs from November 13 – December 11, 2006. Any changes to employee health benefits must be made during this time. Below are a few reminders of the changes employees may be interested in.

**Federal Employees Health Benefits:** Employees may enroll in a health plan, change from one plan or option to another (i.e., high/standard, self only/self and family), or cancel their FEHB enrollment during the open season. The 2007 FEHB guides and individual plan brochures are available on the OPM website at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/>. Employees who wish to make a change to their FEHB coverage must do so through the Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C) Web site at <https://www.abc.army.mil> or by telephone at 1-877-276-9287.

**Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program:** During the open enrollment period, employees may elect supplemental dental and/or vision coverage. To learn more, visit the OPM FEDVIP homepage at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/dentalvision/> and the BENEFEDS Web site at [www.BENEFEDS.com](http://www.BENEFEDS.com). Employees who wish to elect the dental and/or vision insurance must do so through the BENEFEDS portal. BENEFEDS offers customer support by telephone at 1-877-888-3337.

**Flexible Spending Accounts:** An FSA allows employees to set aside pre-tax dollars for out-of-pocket health care and dependent care expenses, thereby reducing the amount of taxes paid. Employees may choose either a health care FSA for out-of-pocket medical expenses such as co-pays, over-the-counter medications, etc., and/or a dependent care FSA for child and/or adult daycare expenses. Employees who had an FSA account in 2006 must reenroll for 2007 if they wish to continue this benefit. To learn more or to enroll, employees must contact FSAFEDS at [www.fsafeds.com](http://www.fsafeds.com) or by phone at 1-877-FSAFEDS (372-3337).

In the October and November issues, we took a closer look at FSAs. Now that we are in the open enrollment period, many employees are considering whether or not an FSA account would be personally beneficial. Employees who may possibly retire or separate from service next year should be informed of the following when considering a 2007 FSA account:

*What happens if I separate or retire before the end of the Benefit Period?*

The balances in your Health Care (HCFSAs) or Limited Expense (LEX HCFSAs) (you can't be enrolled in both types of accounts at the same time) and Dependent Care FSA are treated differently if you separate before the end of the benefit period. Your HCFSAs or LEX HCFSAs will terminate as of the date of your separation. There are no extensions. Any health care expenses incurred prior to the date of separation will still be reimbursable but those incurred after the date of separation will not. You can continue to use the remaining balance in your DCFSAs to pay for eligible dependent care expenses until the end of the benefit period or until your account balance is used up, whichever comes first.



**Thrift Savings Plan:** The maximum amount that actively employed TSP participants can invest in the savings program will rise to \$15,500 in calendar year 2007, up from this year's \$15,000 limit. FERS employees must make sure they structure their biweekly investments so that they can continue investing through the entire calendar year, in order to capture the maximum government contributions; if they hit the dollar limit too soon, their investments will cut off and so will the government's matching contributions. That's not a concern for CSRS investors, who get no government contributions. Meanwhile, the amount of allowable "catch-up" investments will remain unchanged at \$5,000 in 2007. Catch-ups are contributions above the dollar cap allowed for those who are age 50 or above before the end of a calendar year and who have hit the maximum or who are investing enough so that they will do so by the end of the year.

### **SO MANY OPTIONS...WHAT'S THE REAL DEAL?**

The Office of Personnel Management has contracted with 10 plans (seven dental plans and three vision plans) to provide comprehensive dental or vision services to Federal and United States Postal Service employees, annuitants and survivor annuitants under the new Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). These FEDVIP plans have gone through an extensive evaluation through a competitive bidding process.

Enrollment in FEDVIP takes place exclusively through BENEFEDS at [www.BENEFEDS.com](http://www.BENEFEDS.com) or by telephone at: 1-877-888-FEDS (1-877-888-3337) or TTY 1-877-889-5680. Enrollment in FEDVIP does NOT take place directly with an insurance plan.

Key features of all FEDVIP plans include the following:

Key features	FEDVIP	Non-FEDVIP
Enrollment	Via BENEFEDS	Directly with insurance plan
Open Season	Begins November 13	May accept applications at any time
Premiums deducted from salary	YES	Probably not
Pre-tax premiums for employees	YES	NO
Pre-existing exclusions	None	May apply
Waiting periods	None except for orthodontia	May impose a waiting period for other services

There are plans not affiliated with FEDVIP that have designed their programs and Web sites to strongly resemble and sound like FEDVIP. We have received numerous phone calls and e-mails in reference to dental and vision programs which appear to look like FEDVIP, however, they are not part of the FEDVIP. These sites and plans are contacting employees and annuitants requesting credit card/banking information to

enroll in their "federal" plan which is advertising tax free benefits and payroll deductions. **FEDVIP coverage is the only government-wide dental or vision program that qualifies for pre-tax deduction of premiums (premium conversion) for employees.**

There is only one FEDVIP. These are the 10 official FEDVIP dental and vision plans:

Dental:

- Aetna Life Insurance Company
- Government Employees Hospital Association
- MetLife, Inc.
- United Concordia Companies, Inc.
- Triple-S, Inc.
- Group Health Incorporated
- CompBenefits

Vision:

- BlueCross BlueShield
- Spectera
- Vision Service Plan

Also, please keep in mind that FEDVIP coverage will be effective December 31, 2006 for those who enroll during open season. So if you currently already have dental or vision coverage, you can be assured it is **not** FEDVIP coverage.

### LEADERSHIP FIELD MANUAL PUBLISHED

Field Manual 6-22, "Army Leadership: Competent, Confident and Agile," posted to the Internet on Oct. 20, 2006. FM 6-22 is the Army's keystone field manual on leadership. It establishes leadership doctrine and fundamental principles for all Army leaders. Leaders must set the example, teach, and mentor, and this manual provides the principles, concepts and training to accomplish this important task on which America depends. FM 6-22 provides leaders a single source vision of leadership. It emphasizes core leader competencies, values and ethical considerations that leaders must exhibit.

Unlike previous Army leadership doctrine, FM 6-22 points out the roles, responsibility and placement of Army civilians. As you read FM 6-22 you will notice that civilian leadership is integrated throughout the manual. The Army Civilian Corps Creed is also posted in the manual.

Additionally the Center for Army Leadership developed a training support package to assist our leaders in informing their personnel on the Army's new leadership doctrine. FM 6-22 and the training support package are located at <https://usacac.army.mil/cac/cal/index.asp>.

### CIVILIAN HUMAN RESOURCES – ACTIVITY BASED COSTING UPDATE

Where oh where does all this data go??????????



Daily each Civilian Human Resources Agency employee inputs their time spent completing tasks and probably wonders -- where does all that data go. Is it really necessary and helpful?

To quell possible concerns and questions CHRA employees may have, we want to tell you a bit more about CHR-ABC. The data is used to compile reports for CHRA managers and regional directors, which illustrates to them exactly how much time is being spent completing each task. The data can be queried based upon specific functions or key activities for identified time frames. In addition, a manager may query the data of a specific employee. As you can see, this new reporting procedure is a great management tool for our leadership.

Since a high percentage of CHRA employees are inputting data, the accuracy of this data is very important to civilian personnel leadership. It is currently being used to make decisions regarding initiatives such as Joint Basing and the CHR Transformation project. Army is able to show results of time being spent performing personnel related duties more readily than most of the other DoD departments. Currently, the average time spent inputting data in CHR-ABC is 14.26 minutes per day which translates to approximately 1.2 percent of our overall labor budget. CHR-ABC is another innovative tool that attests to Army as a leader in human resources management.

If you have any suggestions to improve the input process or have an easier way to input, please let your CHR-ABC POC know so it can be shared.

### NSPS INTERNS

Interns and developmental employees converting into NSPS positions will see some changes in their career patterns, but the end result will be a well-trained and experienced employee equipped with the right skills to support the workforce of the future.

Interns who are currently funded by the Army Civilian Training, Education, and Development System will convert to NSPS in Spiral 2, beginning in October 2007. Other Army interns and developmental employees convert to NSPS at the same time as their current organization.

All interns will be placed in pay band 1 of the appropriate career group. Pay band 1 is not considered full-performance/journey level for occupations in Department of Army.

Interns will not have a reduction in pay. In fact, many employees will receive an increase in pay due to the within-grade buy in.

The entry/developmental employees in pay band 1 will have noncompetitive promotion potential to pay band 2 since they previously competed for the journey level position when they were first hired.

Interns will reach the same pay range in NSPS that they would have in the legacy GS personnel system. Upon successful completion of the training program,



interns/developmental employees will be promoted to the permanent pay band 2 position with a minimum of 6 percent up to 20 percent increase to base pay.

The Accelerated Compensation for Developmental Positions (ACDP) is a pay setting provision which may be used to recognize the development and attainment of job-related competencies of employees participating in training or developmental programs.

ACDP may be used to provide an increase to employee base salary, a bonus, or a combination of these. This provision provides management flexibility to increase the pay of employees in developmental positions at rates which match or exceed career ladder promotion rates under the General Schedule system.

ACDP requires a rating of record of Level 3 (Valued Performer) or above. If the employee does not have a rating of record, he or she must have performed under an approved performance plan for at least 90 days in a pay status.

ACDP payment is in addition to annual performance payout. It generally shall not exceed a 20 percent annual increase and is granted at management's discretion. Army management will assess employees every six months, and may award a portion of the ACDP at that time.

Career groups and pay bands for interns and developmental employees are:

- Standard Career Group – Professional/Analytical Pay Schedule, YA-1
- Scientific and Engineering Career Group – Professional Pay Schedule, YD-1
- Medical Career Group – Professional Pay Schedule, YH-1
- Investigative and Protective Services Career Group – Investigative Pay Schedule, YK-1

### **FORT MCCOY CPAC SUPPORTING ARMY RESERVE TRANSFORMATION**

A large portion of the workforce supported by the Fort McCoy Civilian Personnel Advisory Center is in the Army Reserve Military Technician Program. Employees in this program provide full-time support to the Army Reserve and the majority of them are required to maintain Army Reserve membership as a condition of their employment.

Recently, the Fort McCoy CPAC has been working with the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) headquarters in planning for a major transformation of the Army Reserve to take place over the next several years. The Army Reserve will undergo dramatic changes due to requirements of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommendations, Army Campaign Plan Decision Points 71, 72 and 74, and Army Reserve Command and Control (ARC2) restructure plans. The changes include disestablishment of several command headquarters, establishment of new command structure at new locations, transfer of functions between commands, transformation of the Army Reserve collective training force structure, and the relocation of the USARC headquarters and other Army Reserve activities due to BRAC actions.

The Fort McCoy CPAC created a team dedicated to support these transformation actions. They have been highly involved with the USARC staff in planning and carrying out the initial stages of the restructuring changes. Members of the team have provided



briefings to over 1,000 employees at more than 15 locations across the U.S. and Puerto Rico since April 2006.

Information in the briefings included transfer of function, transfer of work, reduction in force procedures, and the benefits and placement assistance programs that may be offered with those actions. They have also been heavily involved with management in identifying functions transferring between commands, establishing organizational structure and position descriptions for new commands, and coordinating placements for displaced employees.

The overall intent of the Army Reserve reorganization and transformation is to be better positioned to meet the challenges of the Global War on Terrorism and improve their war fighting readiness. The Fort McCoy CPAC is proud to be a member of the management team in this effort and is looking forward to the challenge of assisting the Army Reserve in their dramatic transformation.

### **NSPS PAY POOL FUNDING**

The Army NSPS Web site (<http://cpol.army.mil/library/general/nsps/about-paypool.html>) has posted a tutorial on pay pools to help employees learn about the new system. This tutorial can be accessed by selecting the heading "All about NSPS" on the menu bar of the Web site and then selecting the heading "Pay Pool Management."

NSPS has many built in protections to insure that civilian pay dollars previously spent under the General Schedule will continue to be applied to civilian pay after the implementation of NSPS.

The first protection is found in the law authorizing NSPS. The law [5 USC 9902(e)(4)] requires that the Department of Defense allocate essentially the same amount of civilian pay after NSPS as it did before NSPS given the same number and mix of employees. The protection is provided through fiscal year 2008.

Thereafter, the law requires DoD to develop a formula to ensure, as a whole, employees are not disadvantaged in terms of the overall amount of pay available as a result of conversion to NSPS.

Another protection is embedded in DoD funding guidance for pay pools. This guidance ensures that money previously spent for pay increases that no longer exist under NSPS [e.g., within-grade increases (WIGIs), quality step increases (QSIs), and promotions to grades that no longer exist (in-band promotions)] continue to be spent for civilian base pay increases under NSPS. This ensures that general schedule pay increase money will not be reallocated to hire more employees or to fund programs outside of civilian pay.

DoD advances this protection by establishing a funding floor for performance based salary increases. This funding floor reflects the amount of money Army has historically spent for WIGIs, QSIs, and in-band promotions under the General Schedule.

## TIDEWATER TRAVELS



Pictured from left to right: Ms. Melinda McMillon Darby and Lt. Col. Lynn Connors, Army Management Staff College professor.

Ms. Melinda McMillon Darby, assistant G-1 for civilian personnel, briefed the last group of students at the Tidewater Sustaining Base Leadership and Management (SBLM) class. SBLM is being replaced by the new Civilian Education System in January 2007, and will graduate its last class of students this December.

While in the Tidewater region, Ms. Darby also visited her staff at the Fort Lee, Fort Eustis, and Fort Monroe Civilian Personnel Advisory Centers.

## CHRA-EUROPE LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON



Pictured from left to right: Ms. Lisa Lessard, Ms. Patricia Bradshaw and Mr. Joseph Levy with members of the CHRA-Europe leadership team.

Members of the CHRA-Europe leadership team welcomed Ms. Patricia Bradshaw, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel, and Mr. Joseph Levy, CHRA-Northeast regional director, to a working lunch during their recent visit to the European theater.

During the luncheon, Ms. Lisa Lessard, CHRA-Europe regional director, provided Ms. Bradshaw and Mr. Levy an overview of the CHRA-Europe Region, region-wide transformation activity, and Lean Six Sigma initiatives. The luncheon afforded Ms. Bradshaw and Mr. Levy the opportunity to informally discuss overseas issues with the leadership team.



Ms. Bradshaw also met with senior leaders in theater and briefed the DoD's Civilian Human Capital Strategic Plan at a Civilian Personnel Town Hall in Heidelberg, Germany.

### ON A PERSONAL NOTE

#### CPAC employee celebrates 50 years of government service



Pictured from left to right: Mr. George Montgomery, Ms. Johnnie Driskell and Col. Douglas Evans.

Ms. Johnnie Driskell, an employee with the Red River Army Depot Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, received a certificate for 50 years of federal service on Sept. 25, 2006.

Ms. Johnnie Driskell started her career with the Army in October 1955. As a recent high school graduate who was too young to enlist, she convinced her mother to sign a waiver and became a member of the Women's Army Corps. Johnnie entered the service at Shreveport, La.

As members of the Women's Army Corps, she and two other recruits traveled by train to participate in six

weeks of basic training at Fort McClellan, Ala. After basic training, Johnnie went to clerical school and was assigned to Ft. McClellan's permanent party. Her first job was with the Post Information Division, where her duties were typing, filing and maintaining the Post Information Division library. She also typed and published the weekly post newspaper. Johnnie continued with these duties until she was discharged in February 1957.

After taking the Army civil service test, Johnnie was hired as a clerk typist at Fort McClellan in June 1957. Her first real job was working for the Post Comptroller, Manpower Division. Eventually, she was promoted to another position in the Comptroller Division, and continued there until March 1960.

Johnnie's desire to move closer to home led her to accept a clerk typist position at White Sands Missile Range, N.M. She continued in that position until later that year when a job offer at Longhorn Army Ammunition Plant gave her the opportunity to work 12 miles from her home. She gladly accepted the offer and again moved her family.

Johnnie's 15-year tour at Longhorn Army Ammunition Plant included several jobs in the Quality Assurance Division, as well as the newly established Army Information Systems Command. She accepted an upward mobility position and after several months of



training, Johnie was permanently promoted to the GS-6 grade level. She continued working in the communications field until October 1975.

The Vietnam era was waning and the workload at Longhorn had decreased, so Johnie moved to the Communication Center at Red River Army Depot where she was eventually promoted to a GS-7 shift supervisor. She retired from federal service in June 1988.

Johnie wasn't retired for long, as she soon accepted various Non-appropriated Fund (NAF) positions. In March 1989, she went to work in the NAF Human Resources Office where she continues to work today.

Johnie's remarkable career has spanned five decades, and she has seen, first hand, the Army's impact throughout the years. Johnie plans to continue working for the foreseeable future. She spends her spare time attending her grandchildren's ball games and reading. Congratulations to Johnie Driskell for 50 rewarding years of federal civil service!

### HR PROFESSIONAL WINS AUSA CIVILIAN AWARD



**Ms. Ruth Crumley**, director, Civilian Human Resources, DCS, G-1, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, N.C., was selected as the winner of the Association of the United States Army 3rd Region Department of the Army Civilian of the Year for 2006. Ms. Crumley was presented the award at the AUSA annual meeting recently held in Washington, DC. She was the only human resources professional to win this distinguished honor this year. Despite the many challenges facing her command during a period of

Pictured from left to right: Mr. Bill Crumley, Ms. Ruth Crumley, local AUSA members and USASOC staff, and USASOC commanding general, Lt. Gen. Robert W. Wagner.

constant change, Ms. Crumley's exceptional quality customer service never wavered. Ruth is a highly respected member of the USASOC senior leadership team and serves as the HR advisor to all USASOC major subordinate commanders located in 28 states and three foreign countries. As a leader she knows that believing in and investing in her employees not only makes good business sense, but is essential for leading, developing, and achieving the most motivated and highly-productive staff possible. Ms. Crumley is the consummate federal employee and sets the standard for others to emulate.



*The "On a Personal Note" section is dedicated to providing information regarding retirements, promotions, deaths, etc. of those in our civilian personnel community. If you have information of this nature you would like included, please contact the editor at the address below.*

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Archived editions of the CP Bulletin are available at <http://cpol.army.mil/library/cpb/>

#### Editorial Policy:

The bulletin editor encourages you to share your opinions, ideas, and suggestions. Comments and feedback from both individuals and organizations are very welcome. All correspondence must have the name and contact information of the originator in the event there is a need to reach the author for additional information. Please forward comments, suggestions, or news items for publication to the editor at CPB Editor [<CPB-info@asamara.hoffman.army.mil>](mailto:CPB-info@asamara.hoffman.army.mil) for final approval.

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#### Communication Cell

This is a functional bulletin prepared in accordance with AR 25-30. It contains official information of importance to the civilian personnel community of the Department of the Army. The information in this bulletin expires 60 days from the date of publication.







## **ARMY CIVILIAN CORPS CREED**

**I am an Army Civilian – a member of the Army Team**

**I am dedicated to our Army, our Soldiers and Civilians**

**I will always support the mission**

**I provide stability and continuity during war and peace**

**I support and defend the Constitution of the United States and consider it an honor to serve our Nation and our Army**

**I live the Army values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage**

**I am an Army Civilian**